

# Update

*Congressman*

**Rubén Hinojosa**

**Representing the 15th  
District of Texas**

Dear Friends,

There are many new and important issues we are addressing in Congress that directly affect everyone in the 15th Congressional District of Texas. In this brochure I will provide information on some of the very positive developments on issues such as Health Care, Transportation, Energy, Immigration Reform and the DREAM Act, STEM Education, and Job Creation.

The 15th Congressional District of Texas is on the verge of a very exciting future when it comes to job creation and boosting our economy. Just last month, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) gave the green light to a new \$22 million irradiation treatment facility in the Rio Grande Valley that will, according to the McAllen Economic Development Corporation, create over 100 jobs and hundreds of indirect jobs. Also, in the McAllen Free Trade Zone, according to the McAllen Economic Development Corporation, 40,000 jobs will be created in Deep South Texas through the new Education and Research Park that got its start due to a \$350,000 federal grant I obtained to invest in rapid manufacturing technology. We continue to receive great news in the Coastal Bend where the Eagle Ford Shale company has, according to the Center for Community and Business Research at The University of Texas at San Antonio Institute for Economic Development, created over 47,000 full time jobs and contributed \$25 billion to the region in just one year!

We are on the brink of an incredible economic future in South Texas, and I will continue to work on promoting infrastructure, economic growth, job creation and, of course, progress.

Sincerely,

*Rubén Hinojosa*  
Member of Congress

Rep. Hinojosa meets with  
STC faculty at the Free Trade  
Zone in McAllen to discuss  
manufacturing.



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# STEM Education

As the former Chairman of the Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and Competitiveness Subcommittee, I supported the historic Higher Education Reconciliation Bill of 2010. I stood next to President Obama when he signed the biggest higher education reform bill since the G.I. Bill of 1945 into law.

This bill invests \$2.55 billion in Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions and recognizes the important role that minority-serving institutions, like the University of Texas Pan-American (UTPA), play in educating our country's low-income and minority students.

These funds will allow these critical institutions to recruit and graduate minority students, particularly in the fields of math, science, engineering and technology (STEM), that our nation needs to remain competitive. Our students in South Texas are ready to take on the challenge and compete in the world of STEM fields. I am doing everything I can to make higher education more accessible and affordable for these students to succeed.

*Congressman Hinojosa meets with students in Freer to discuss STEM education issues.*



# Transportation

I have been working on infrastructure projects since taking office. We are seeing great progress and improvements that will help large companies and small businesses throughout the Rio Grande Valley and South Texas be more competitive. The Transportation Act of 2012 authorizes spending of about \$120 billion through 2014 and funds most of that by extending various fuel and highway taxes.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, we have literally saved more than 1.9 million jobs by making sure the Surface Transportation Act of 2012 was passed. This will provide funding for TXDOT to make improvements to our roads, particularly throughout the Eagle Ford Shale play, where we are seeing increased traffic and safety issues.

I co-sponsored language in the bill that will allow sections of the I-69 routes in Texas that are at interstate standard but are not connected to an existing interstate highway to be designated as part of the Interstate Highway System and signed. This is extremely important for expanding international trade and commerce in our region, bringing jobs and boosting our economy.



*Congressman Hinojosa meets with Texas Department of Transportation Commissioner Jeff Austin III and The Alliance for I-69 Texas Chairman Judge John Thompson to discuss transportation infrastructure in Texas.*

# Health Care

After two and a half years of being signed into law, new data demonstrates the benefits that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has already provided to seniors, young adults, small businesses, and many others in our 15th Congressional District of Texas. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), 2.5 million more young adults have health insurance on their parents' plan, including 357,000 in Texas. According to HHS, in Texas more than 210,000 seniors received prescription drug discounts worth \$14,754,191, an average discount of \$639 per senior. In addition, seniors are receiving Medicare preventive services without cost sharing. In Texas over 1 million children and 2.8 million adults now have received expanded coverage of at least some preventive services without cost sharing.

When it comes to small businesses, in 2011, 360,000 received tax credits across the country to help maintain or expand health care coverage for their employees, according to the White House. Already, \$3.9 billion in public health grants have been given to community health centers, hospitals, doctors, and other health care providers in the district to improve the community's health. For those parents who worried and their children who suffered, now up to 17 million children with preexisting health conditions can no longer be denied coverage by health insurers, according to HHS. Today, for 47 million women, the Affordable Care Act is opening new doors to quality, affordable, and accessible preventive care, according to HHS. No longer will insurance companies be able to charge co-pays for a host of preventive services, including HIV screening, well-woman visits, gestational diabetes testing, contraception, and domestic violence counseling. This is one of the many provisions of the Affordable Care Act that makes it easier for women and their doctors – and not insurance companies – to make health care decisions.

# Comprehensive Immigration Reform and the DREAM Act

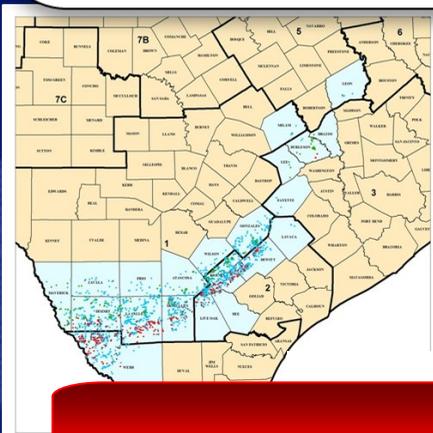
As a strong supporter of comprehensive immigration reform, I believe that ultimately we need to address every aspect of our nation's broken immigration policies if we are to solve the problem. In our border district, we understand that there are undocumented immigrants who contribute to our economy and to our nation as a whole and then of course there are the other elements who are involved in the world of crime who are not welcome. We should be focusing the scarce resources of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on finding criminals, while creating a rational legalization process to deal with those hard working immigrants who only want to contribute to our economy.

Many of us will continue to fight on behalf of DREAM students and immigrant families. In my view, DREAM students must be given the opportunity to contribute their talent to our nation's economy, workforce, and civic life.

This country is made up of so many immigrants who over the centuries worked hard to earn their way and gain respect in this country, though they faced prejudice, racism and religious persecution. These immigrant children are already showing us what they have done and now they want to show us what more they can do to contribute to this great country.

These young people study in our schools, play in our neighborhoods, and pledge allegiance to our flag. They are Americans in their hearts, in their minds, in every single way but on paper. They were brought to this country by their parents—sometimes even as infants—and yet they live under the threat of deportation to a country they may know nothing about. DREAM students know America as their home.

The Administration and Congress must work to implement President Obama's deferred action policy in a comprehensive and humane manner and put DREAM students on a path to citizenship by passing the DREAM Act.



*Left: A map of the Eagle Ford Shale Play, courtesy of the Texas Railroad Commission.*

*Right: Rep. Hinojosa meets with DREAM Act students to discuss immigration and education issues.*



## Energy

The Eagle Ford Shale boom has transformed South Texas in lasting ways. According to the Center for Community and Business Research at The University of Texas at San Antonio Institute for Economic Development, it has created over 47,000 jobs and added over \$25 billion in economic output to the region last year and over \$3.1 billion in salaries and benefits to workers. This incredible economic activity has led to new investments in local businesses. We have seen new motels, restaurants, retail stores and houses being created at a breakneck pace. The boom has also led to an incredible increase in tax revenues. In the third quarter of last year Texas collected \$3.7 billion in taxes tied to extracting natural resources, a 76 percent increase from the same period in 2010. For example, Dewitt County in my district has been able to reduce its property-tax rate by 18 percent this year while its property value jumped 27 percent. Most importantly, the shale boom has brought jobs. In Bee County, unemployment was at 10% in June of last year. Within six months it dropped to 7.8%. Some experts say that many of these jobs are expected to be around for the next 15-20 years.

Texas is not just leading the way in oil and gas development; we are also the nation's leading producer of wind energy. I agree with President Obama in promoting an "all of the above" energy strategy that not only promotes increased drilling for oil and natural gas, but also moves us towards the next generation of renewable energy like wind and solar. According to the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA), electricity from wind power in the U.S. will supply the equivalent of over 12.2 million American homes this year alone. Unfortunately this growth is in jeopardy if we allow the existing wind tax credit to expire at the end of the year. Losing this credit will lead to the loss of thousands of jobs and threaten an industry that provides one of the most cost-effective sources of new electricity generation and accounts for 35%, according to AWEA, of all new electricity generating capacity since 2007. If we are to free ourselves from the dependence on foreign sources of energy, we must utilize all of the bountiful natural resources available to us. I will continue to work with my colleagues on the Hill to promote and defend American-made energy.



## *Exercise Your Right to Vote November 6th*

The last day to register to vote for the general election is October 9, 2012. You can register in person at your county Voter Registrar's office. (In most Texas counties, the Tax Assessor-Collector is also the Voter Registrar. In some counties, the County Clerk or Elections Administrator registers voters.)

Or you can register by mail by obtaining an application from your county Voter Registrar's office or the Secretary of State's office and returning it at least 30 days before the election. You can also pick up applications at libraries, government offices, or high schools or go online at [VoteTexas.gov](http://VoteTexas.gov). **If you have moved within the county you must notify your county registrar of your new address, if you have moved to another county you must re-register.**

### Need ID?

Your voter application asks for one of three identification numbers. If you have not received any of these, you are still eligible to register to vote, but you will be required to provide proof of your identity at the polling place. Acceptable identification includes **any one** of the following:

- A driver's license or personal identification card issued to you by the Texas Department of Public Safety. You may also bring a similar document issued to you by an agency of another state, even if the license or card has expired;
- A form of identification that contains your photograph and establishes your identity;
- A birth certificate or other document confirming birth that is admissible in a court of law and establishes the person's identity;
- Your United States citizenship papers;
- Your United States passport;
- Official mail addressed to you by a governmental entity; or
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows your name and address.

## *Contact Congressman Hinojosa:*

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